

Nong Tony

If there's one person who can write the history of Mangagoy, Bislig both in words and images, it would be 'Nong Tony. It was he who immortalized the smiles, the stories and the lives of every family I know in Mangagoy the way Gabriel Garcia Marquez immortalized his stories. It was he who brings color and beauty to otherwise drab pictures of smiling kids with no front teeth. My graduation pictures, class pictures and glamshots (yes, those even the ones where you hold that tiny piece of leaf or perhaps beside a white sedan at the parking lot of the parish church) — all taken by him.

And after 84 years of living a well-lived fruitful life, 'Nong Tony peacefully passed away in his sleep. He left a legacy. A legacy of history captured in images. A legacy of love for your roots and your hometown. His pictures have immortalized our memories, as our memories immortalize his.

Shiela , a kababata, relates the experience with a fervor of that of a daughter. And Joey , his grandson who inherited his love for photography, wrote a short memoir for him.

And for those whose childhood has been immortalized by him, let us offer a prayer fit for 'Nong Tony.